

THE PEKING-MOSCOW AXIS & THE WESTERN ALLIANCE

How Really Hopeful for Us Are Their Disagreements?

FRANZ BORKENAU

SINCE the Communist victory in China, fierce international debate has raged over the correct policy the West should follow toward Mao's regime. One view holds that China and Russia have to be treated as but two sides of the same coin; that the two powers are at one not only in their hostility toward the West, but in their aims and methods; and that it is futile, indeed dangerous, to suppose that one can divide them. This point of view is predominant in the United States. The other, which prevails in Britain, holds that Chinese Communism is quite different from the Russian kind, and maintains the West can exploit the difference to its own advantage by treating Red China as a friend, and making concessions to her.

In my view, neither position is correct. There are indeed divergences between Moscow and Peking, inevitably so, but they are not necessarily such as can be exploited by the West, or such as will induce China to prefer the West's friendship to Russia's.

IN THE face of the continuing threat of the two massive Communist totalitarian powers—no less real because tactical "peace doves" are sometimes flown in alternation with jet planes over our lines—it becomes of high importance to try to fathom the differing aims of Red Russia and Red China. At the least, this will help us to direct our defenses toward the more threatening sector; and conceivably it might show us how a wedge might be driven between the two Communist colossi. For obviously they, too, must be having problems of "coexistence" between them. FRANZ BORKENAU, a leading authority on international Communism, described in our pages in April 1954 ("Getting at the Facts Behind the Soviet Façade") the methods of historical detection by which he is able to penetrate some of the mysteries hidden behind the Iron Curtain. Born in Vienna, Mr. Borkenau knew Communist politics at firsthand in Germany during the 20's, and emigrated to England with Hitler's advent. His latest book is *European Communism* (Harper).

Many of these differences, while deeply rooted in the internal history of the international Communist movement, pertain more to tactics than to any essential conflict over principle or strategy. They do not really affect the basic Communist commitment to permanent aggression against Western "capitalistic imperialism"—anti-Westernism is an axiom for both partners. At the same time these tactical disagreements continue to play an important part in Russo-Chinese relations and are, for the present, of much more moment than fancied divergences of fundamental philosophy, or the obvious actual divergences between Chinese and Russian "tradition" and "civilization." Failure to understand the tactical disagreements between the two Red powers means the continuance of unnecessary confusion and bitterness in the Anglo-American alliance, and the loss of any possibility of effective action.

To grasp these differences it is necessary to understand the internal workings and mutual relations of the parties making up the world Communist movement—and most of all the relations of the various national parties with Moscow and Peking. All sorts of rivalries, personal and national, influence world Communism's internal relations—but an even more important influence is the acts of the anti-Communist forces themselves.

So far as I can tell from the evidence I have sifted—and it is very scanty for the years since 1950—Russo-Chinese cooperation today is closer than ever, in no small part because of the mistakes made by the West. And the evidence would also show that the mistakes have been due not to the West's uncompromising firmness or diplomatic "rigidity" in countering Communist aggression, but in almost every case to unwise concessions and flaccidity of purpose. There was, and still is, dissension between Red China and Red Russia, but it cannot be exploited or deepened by conciliating one or the other.

In fact, it has been strong, cool-headed Western resistance that has most often sharpened differences between Mao and the Kremlin.

ONE sure fact can serve as the starting point for our investigation of Russo-Chinese relations today. Mao Tse-tung, alone among the present leaders of international Communism, rose to power *without Stalin's support*. In fact, had not Stalin been ignorant of and largely indifferent to what was happening in the areas of China under partisan control before 1937, Mao would in all likelihood have been purged long ago. But by the time the Japanese threat called Stalin's attention to the Far East Mao had become indispensable to him as a means of diverting Japanese aggression away from the USSR. And with the outbreak of World War II Moscow lost its last chance of exerting real control over him.

True, when Mao made a pact with Chiang Kai-shek in 1937, this fell in with Stalin's own wishes; undoubtedly, too, Mao himself was very much in favor of a broad national united front as a means of fighting off Japan. But this does not mean that he carried out this tactic in full accordance with the "general line" prescribed by Stalin at the time. Even before 1941, Mao cooperated with or sabotaged the efforts of the Kuomintang exclusively in obedience to his own views of the changing situation; and throughout he ran the Chinese Communist party as he saw fit, maintaining virtually complete independence of the Kremlin. Thus there was no Chinese counterpart of the great Russian purge of 1937-38; nor did either Mao's own police system or Stalin's GPU ever acquire major influence over internal party affairs in China. Indeed, as Hitler's invasion of Russia approached, Mao's attitude of independence deepened to one of hostility, at least as far as Stalinist control over the internal workings of the individual Communist parties was concerned. He expelled all Moscow-trained people from the leadership of the Chinese party, imposed strict penalties on those who tried to persecute fellow party members, and banned the term "Stalinism" from his party's propaganda.

All this, no doubt, contributed to the almost open hostility Stalin showed to Mao as soon as Russia regained her breath after the end of the war. Meanwhile, Mao had wrested

all of North China, with the exception of a few big towns, from both the Japanese and the Kuomintang—without Stalin's help. The latter, on the contrary, had backed Chiang Kai-shek in all the important decisions made during the war years. There is evidence that the Russians thoroughly sacked Manchuria before evacuating it in 1945, leaving very little for Mao except part of the captured Japanese arms and equipment; and there is no evidence that Mao got any other material aid from Moscow at this time. Stalin himself later went on record with the statement that Mao's resumption of open warfare against Chiang in 1946 was in defiance of his own "advice." This fits in with other steps taken by Stalin during the same period, when official Kremlin policy still maintained the fiction of a "Big Three" alliance and Stalin apparently did not want to show his hand prematurely by fomenting new civil wars.

In the end, Mao conquered China not only without Stalin's aid but against his will. And it would be an underestimation of Stalin and his helpers to think that they did not view with apprehension and resentment the threat that they felt the victory of Chinese Communism offered to their exclusive control of world Communism.

NOW Mao, though he was much less tyrannical and ruthless than Stalin in internal party matters, at least during the 1940's, was much more bold and aggressive towards the non-Communist world. But whereas under Stalin such a policy of aggressiveness would have inevitably entailed a rigid and very "leftist" line in tactics, Mao was able to combine extreme aggressiveness with an utter flexibility of diplomatic maneuver that permitted him to form alliances with his intended victims. This was something new for Communism in Russia and the West, where aggressiveness in policy and flexibility in tactics have always been incompatible—in practice if not in theory.

As a consequence of his unorthodoxy, Mao found himself in disagreement with both of the factions that were struggling for supremacy in the Kremlin all through the late 1940's and early 1950's. Because he was always for audaciously taking the offensive, he obviously did not belong with the cautious or "rightist" group in the Politburo. Consequently, its "leftist" or "partisan" element,

which hoped to conquer France, Belgium, and Greece by guerrilla warfare—and actually succeeded in winning Yugoslavia—took him for one of their own. Tito, after his break with Moscow, made no secret of his feeling that Mao was his only peer and companion-in-arms. Hadn't they both triumphed by their own strength and initiative, in disregard of Stalin's warnings and the advice of Russian military experts? Hadn't they both resisted Stalin's way of running things in their respective Communist parties? But Mao turned a deaf ear to Tito's wooing.

Mao had his reasons. In the first place, as imminent ruler of an empire of more than four hundred millions, he would have lowered himself by entertaining proposals from the head of a minor European country, or even from such unorthodox Russian supporters of Tito as Zhdanov. In the second place, he had always avoided, even when he was of small account in the Communist world, identifying himself with any one faction in it. And in the third place, he did not really agree with the extreme "leftists" any more than with the moderates. When the former won temporary ascendancy within the Kremlin in 1947 and founded the Cominform, the meaning and extent of his disagreements with them became immediately apparent. In fact, Mao's differences with the "leftist" Cominform, and particularly with the other Asian parties belonging to it, provide us with the most reliable evidence we have about Moscow-Peking relations.

LONG before the founding of the Cominform, Stalin had gained an ally against Mao in the Far East in the person of Ho Chi Minh in Indo-China. Ho Chi Minh was a Moscow-trained Stalinist, had been the man behind the scenes in the Shanghai bureau of the Comintern, the one which had held out longest against Mao's leadership, and—last but not least—he was a Vietnamese nationalist and as such always hostile to Chinese influence. And if the start of his insurrection in Vietnam, in 1946, almost coincided with Mao's renewal of the civil war in China, it was not due to Chinese inspiration but to strictly local developments. Mao was still on the defensive in his Yen-an stronghold when Ho went into action, and the latter's early successes made it possible for him to keep his independence when Mao's armies

reached the Tonkinese border three years later.

Nor was the Indian Communist party on Mao's side. Moscow during and after the war did not shape its policy in India with a view to checking Mao—who was still very far away and not expected to win without Russian support—but there, too, things turned out in Moscow's favor in the end and against Mao. While the world war still raged, Moscow had required the Indian Communist party to follow a very cautious line, finding in Yoshi, an old trade-unionist with markedly reformist tendencies, the best man to carry out that line. All the more reason why, when Mao embarked on his adventure against Moscow's orders in 1946, Yoshi continued to stand pat and refused to try anything similar.

The situation in the other Communist parties of Southern and Southeastern Asia was much less clear. Despite the fact that the emigrant Chinese had contributed importantly to the rise of the Communist movements in this area, Mao had little influence over any of them. On the other hand, they were not under effective Moscow control either, as most of their ties with the rest of the world had been cut by the Japanese occupation. A guerrilla tradition had formed in the Philippines, Burma, and Indonesia, but without firm foundation in Communist doctrine and not clearly marked off from nationalist and labor reformist tendencies. In several countries the Communist parties had undergone splits; in others, haphazard insurrections were started, all of which collapsed. In general, the situation was chaotic.

The Cominform took it upon itself to impose order and, among other things, purge these Communist parties of the heretical, reformist tendencies that had cropped up in all of them. This was the task set those Communist leaders of Southern Asia who met in Calcutta in February 1948 under the guise of a trade union conference. Though there is no reliable information about what exactly took place at this meeting, its subsequent effects were an immediate reshuffling of Communist leadership, with the weeding out of the less extremist elements, followed by an increased aggressiveness of Communist tactics in South Asia. The guerrilla fighting already under way in Malaya, Vietnam, Burma, and the Philippines now took on the proportions of real war. In both India and

Indonesia the previous Communist leadership was thrown out; two extremists, Rana-dive in India and Musso in Java, took over and straightway launched armed uprisings.

Mao's opposition to these steps was prompt and sharp. He was not at all gratified by these attempts to imitate his aggressiveness—first of all, because they were ill-considered. He had gone to war in China with his political ground well prepared; the Malayan Communists had started fighting without such preparation. Mao, even in the midst of the bitterest fighting with the Kuomintang, never broke his links with Chinese nationalism and always championed every nationalist aim. The Communists of Southern Asia started on their new extremist course by breaking completely with all non-Communist political forces. Mao had always been able to yoke together diverse elements in his party. His counterparts in Malaya, Burma, Indonesia, and the other countries started out by expelling, from the leadership and party, members who did not agree with them—in Malaya the dissidents were shot. Mao had always insisted on making allowances for regional and national peculiarities. The men of the Calcutta conference, in the Stalinist style of the late 20's and the 30's, tried to impose one and the same aggressive line everywhere—and not only upon Asian but even upon European and South American Communists. Things reached the point where the new leaders of the Indian Communist party began to attack Mao in their press as a petty-bourgeois opportunist.

Meanwhile the Russians sought to exert pressure on Mao by installing Li Li-san as boss in Red Manchuria. Li Li-san was not only a left extremist, but Mao's bitterest personal enemy inside the Chinese Communist movement. Mao was strong enough in the end to get him removed, but his successor, Kaokang, likewise followed an extremist line, apparently on orders from Moscow. At the same time, the North Korean Communist state was established under exclusively Russian control. But the internal Communist conflict with Mao during this period reached its climax over the issue of control of the Japanese Communist party.

THE Japanese Communist party, virtually nonexistent by 1945, was rebuilt with considerable if inadvertent American help.

Among its exiled leaders, one Nozaka enjoyed the highest prestige. Tired of cooling his heels in Moscow, Nozaka had gone to Yenan shortly before Hitler's invasion of Russia, where Mao received him with honors and put him in charge of Japanese prisoners of war. After the armistice Nozaka, now become a trustworthy Maotist, was flown home to Japan in an American military plane and started to rebuild the party, displaying that combination of caution and flexibility which is the hallmark of Maotist technique. Then, in 1949, when certain elements in the Kremlin were still sternly preaching left militancy, although Tito had rebelled and Zhdanov was dead, *Pravda* attacked Nozaka in terms that seemed to forebode at least his demotion if not expulsion. The man designated to fill his place was one Shiga, a Moscow-trained Marxist theoretician who was as leftist as any Cominform man could want.

Peking reacted to this turn of affairs with a step that was far more challenging than Tito's rebellion of the year before. In 1951, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist party, the latter's Central Committee issued a set of theses emphasizing the differences, not the similarities, between Maotism and Stalinism. Though Russian Communism—these theses admitted—had blazed the trail of revolution which the highly industrialized countries (!) must follow, the applicability of this experience to China was tacitly denied; the trail-blazer for the revolution in all industrially backward, colonial, and "semi-colonial" countries was Mao. In view of the latitude of meaning Communist jargon allows the term "semi-colonialism," which embraces such areas as Latin America, this amounted to claiming for China the leadership of the revolutionary movement over three-quarters of the globe. These theses were, in effect, an ideological declaration of war against Stalin.

While their sharpness must have been in part a response to the Calcutta conference, with its implicit assertion of an exclusively Stalinist leadership for world Communism, these theses can be held to express the real and abiding views of the Communist leaders of China. They must therefore be regarded as a crucial document for the study of Sino-Soviet relations. In them, revolution, of which till then Chinese nationalism had been

an instrument, is now seen to become the instrument of Chinese nationalism and the means by which it is hoped to achieve virtual Chinese domination of the world.

Nor did the fact that the Russian Revolution had furnished the spark for the Chinese one prevent the latter's leaders from adopting, in thinly veiled form, the anti-"white man" position that had inspired Chinese nationalism in the first place. And in anticipation of a worldwide victory of Communism that would eliminate the West as a power center, the Chinese leaders directed their anti-"white man" proclamation, not primarily against Western Europe and America, but against Russia, calling on Asians and then Africans and Latin Americans to follow Peking's, not Moscow's, lead.

If this ambition seems absurd, it should be remembered that the Chinese are used to reckoning over great periods of time; dreams like these, handed down over generations, are not incompatible with the greatest tactical elasticity.

THIS threat of rebellion against Stalin by the Chinese Communist Central Committee was opportunely made, for Mao could capitalize on the effect of Tito's recent break. It was clear that if Mao also broke, Moscow could do little about it. Moreover, the theses were issued at the very moment when the Russian Politburo was about to oust Vosnesensky, the last avowed left extremist, and advocate of an immediate attack on the West, among its members. Molotov was reluctantly lifting the Berlin blockade, and Stalin's attempts to foment a rebellion in Yugoslavia against Tito were being abandoned. The general failure of the Cominform's aggressive left line had become plain, and the Moscow and extremist factions in the Communist parties of Asia now began a swift retreat all along the line, first in Indonesia, then in India, Burma, the Philippines, and finally in Japan. Malaya remained the sole exception; her Communists continued for years to follow extremist tactics and to wage guerrilla warfare. North Korea, however, still remained under exclusively Russian control; and in Vietnam, where the Reds, despite their continuation of the civil war, had not gone in for an aggressive leftism at all as far as agitation was concerned, things remained as before.

Mao, here again demonstrating the tactical restraint which is characteristic of him, did not in his hour of victory imitate the Cominform and demand complete control everywhere and in everything. Maotists and Stalinists seem to have been merged in the new politburos of the Asian Communist parties that replaced those of the Cominform and Calcutta period. The settlement of inner-party differences in Japan was typical. Shiga, who had replaced Nozaka, remained in the leadership, but Nozaka returned, and a triumvirate composed of these two men and another man called Tokuda was created to hold a balance between Moscow and Peking influence, and a balance, too, between the hotheads and the cool ones. In India, however, Ranadive, who had stuck his neck out by insulting Mao publicly, disappeared, and his eventual successor, A. K. Ghosh, called off the Communist uprisings that Ranadive had started. There are strong grounds for thinking that the gradual termination of the Red uprisings in other Asian countries—with the above-mentioned exception of Vietnam and Malaya—was likewise due in large part to this Communist change of line rather than to the West's own military pressure.

THE next important milestone came at the beginning of 1950, when Mao and Chou En-lai, accompanied by a large Chinese delegation, went to Moscow for a long visit. What was actually decided at their meetings with the Russian leaders is not known. Since then, in fact, an almost complete veil has been drawn over Sino-Soviet relations. Except in Korea, no major changes have been made since the Chinese visit to Moscow in the leadership of the Asian Communist parties outside China, and this has deprived us of a major clue as to what goes on inside them. At the same time the ideological shibboleths whose appearance and disappearance help throw light on the ups and downs of leadership and policy inside Russia have since 1951 been systematically played down in relations between the Chinese and the Russian regimes. While in China "Maotism" is no longer insisted on as a separate doctrine, in Russia the term "Stalinism" appears—as we know—much less frequently than it used to. Whatever else Stalin, Mao, Chou, and Molotov agreed upon during their meetings,

they certainly agreed that neither side should give the West further opportunity to discern and comment upon their differences.

IT IS probable, however, that the chief topic of their discussions was Korea. We know that during the first phase China had remained entirely outside the Korean war. And the likely reason for this was not Mao's caution, but Moscow's refusal to let him jump into the fray. The conquest of South Korea—which Stalin expected to bring off very quickly and cheaply—was designed not only to reduce American influence in Asia by its psychological effect, but also to head off Chinese expansion in Southern *as well as* Northern Asia. Another immediate aim was to cut China off completely from Japan and thus eliminate the measure of influence on Japanese Communism that Moscow had just conceded to Mao. Further, the Russian absorption of South Korea would diminish Mao's prestige in Asia among both Communists and non-Communists. Moscow had to move fast because in the Russo-Chinese rivalry time was working in China's favor: the more time she had to strengthen her base at home, the more time she had to expand her influence abroad.

In sum, Moscow's independent Korean venture would seem to have been an attempt to reassert, before it was too late, Russian superiority over Mao and exclusive Russian control over Asian Communism outside China. In other words, Stalin wanted, with characteristic double-dealing, to take back the concessions he had just made to Mao, and to prevent Red China from rising to a position of world power.

Yet certain restraints had been imposed in advance on Stalin's Korean adventure by the course of the internal party struggle in the USSR. Russia wanted in no case to meet American troops on the battlefield. Stalin himself had implicitly laid down this restriction when in 1948-49 he overthrew the Cominform faction that wished to risk an immediate war with the West. It was this same restriction, however, that gave Mao his chance. Since Russia was resolved not to intervene openly in Korea, she could not keep Mao from doing so when General MacArthur gave him the pretext and he had American troops within his reach near the Yalu.

WESTERNERS, like MacArthur himself, who regarded Red China as more dangerous than Red Russia failed to realize that by advancing beyond Pyongyang the UN army was actually helping Mao in his struggle with Stalin and Stalin's friends—of whom there were some—inside the Chinese politburo. MacArthur's disastrous advance into the north did more, in effect, than the Russo-Chinese meetings of January 1950 to establish equality between Moscow and Peking. For it was Mao, not Stalin, who temporarily recaptured Seoul, and who when the armistice came had exclusive military possession of North Korea, thereby depriving Russia of one of her most prized gains from World War II. It was Mao, again, not Stalin, who was left with exclusive control of Red Asia's jump-off points to Japan, and who reaped all the prestige from having inflicted a defeat on an American army—a triumph that made Red China look like a major military power.

There were some in the West who rejoiced at this, believing that a more equal balance of power between Moscow and Peking was all to the good. They counted on the paralyzing effect Russo-Chinese antagonisms would have on Communist aggression as a whole once China had grown strong enough to thwart Russian intentions. If so, they grievously misread the character of Sino-Soviet relations.

It was his subordination to Moscow that had driven Mao to the brink of revolt, but once he had got equality his resentment could be forgotten, and this had the effect of strengthening cooperation between the two Red powers, at least for the time being, as we can see from the fact that not once since the Korean war has Moscow tried to exclude Peking from an international decision. Mao, for his part, has acted with his usual circumspectness and sense of what is and is not possible. It would have been a brutal affront to Moscow had Mao exploited his military control of North Korea to set up a Chinese puppet government there. He refrained from any such attempt and cooperated with Russia in a purge of the North Korean Communist leadership that, though its details are impenetrable, seems to have resulted in a balance between Russian and Chinese influence in it. If before he had asserted himself vigorously, now he showed flexibility and a spirit of conciliation.

THENCEFORTH all the Russians have been able to do about Mao is try to exploit antagonisms within his leadership. In the spring of 1952 Kaokang—whom we have already mentioned as a Moscow man—made a resounding declaration on Chinese domestic politics which, though using all the official slogans prescribed by Mao at the time, amounted to a sharp attack on him. Just then the “three-point” and “five-point” campaigns against bureaucracy and graft in China were under way, together with a campaign to increase the rate of industrial expansion and agricultural collectivization. Kaokang now called for the complete expropriation of the industrial bourgeoisie and the total collectivization of the land as an *immediate* aim. That is, he advocated what Stalin had practiced in the USSR in 1930, a campaign of forced collectivization with all its attendant violence and social upheaval.

Kaokang was not advocating a left extremist line in the sense given it by the late Zhdanov, who had been much more concerned with aggression abroad and ideological orthodoxy than with social transformation at home, yet he was echoing Zhdanov to the extent that he called for a new and forthright revolutionary offensive, albeit on the home front. As we have said, Kaokang has close ties with Moscow; if we look for the particular group there with whom his views are most in harmony, the name of Khrushchev comes to mind—he, too, is a left extremist more interested in social changes at home than in aggression abroad.

Kaokang's declaration fell in with the Kremlin's wishes—or at least with those of the leftist faction there—for two major reasons. First, what he asked for ran directly counter to Mao's cautious line. Second, if acceded to, it would have kept Red China out of international affairs for years to come. Under Chinese conditions, as under those prevailing in Russia during the first Five Year Plan, social revolution at home and aggression abroad were exclusive alternatives; the underdeveloped economic and administrative structure of the country could not support both courses at one and the same time. Kaokang's policy would have meant years of isolation for China, and, more than that, years of abject dependence on Russian economic help. Clearly, one faction in Moscow was trying, now that other means had

failed, to undermine Mao from inside his own politburo by pushing him into all-out social revolution.

Once more Mao rose to meet the threat. Again, the details of what followed are hidden. But we know that his influence in his own party was much too strong for any rival leader to oppose him. And we also know that he could exploit Chinese hatred of white men; in their character of being white the Russians played, inside as well as outside the Communist camp in Asia, a far from insignificant role as “foreign devils” and oppressors. Thirdly, Mao had behind him a party machine and a strong army that twenty-five years of hard work had built up independently of Moscow. Last but not least, Russia in 1952 was in no position to impose its will or influence on a strong and recalcitrant partner, for on the eve of Stalin's demise a struggle between him and the rest of his Politburo was impending, while a life-and-death struggle had already broken out behind the scenes among the triumvirate of his future successors, Beria, Malenkov, and Khrushchev, in which they fought against Stalin too. In this situation, when one of these leaders advocated a certain line the others were sure to oppose him. Stalin may have approved of Kaokang's initiative in China, having always been anti-Maotist himself; but for Malenkov and Beria this could have been only one more reason for assuring Mao of their friendship and complete understanding of his desire not to have Chinese internal affairs subject to foreign interference, as well as to speak with an equal voice in international affairs. And so Mao, as we know, defeated Kaokang, and in 1954 demoted him (though not to a very low position).

HAVING refused to embark on an all-encompassing social revolution at home, Mao was able to continue the Korean war at full strength. And in the course of that war he exploded another Western illusion about him: namely, that he was less dangerous and aggressive than Stalin because suppler. As the propaganda charges made against the Americans about “bacteriological warfare” clearly showed, it was Peking rather than Moscow that embittered the conflict in Korea in every way and made its settlement difficult if not impossible. Whereas Kaokang

wanted social revolution at home, Mao and Chu Teh, flushed with the triumph of their national revolution, sought any and every kind of further conquest short of one precipitating a third world war.

Both before and during the Korean armistice negotiations, there appear to have been differences between Moscow and Peking; I think it safe to assume that it was Peking that almost every time held out for the harder line, while Moscow wished to call a speedy halt to an adventure that had turned out so badly for itself. This must certainly have been Beria's desire, very likely it was Malenkov's as well. Stalin's death finally freed the Russian Politburo's hands, and it may very well have been the decisive factor in Mao's yielding to Russian urgency and at long last agreeing to an armistice. But Mao *yielded*—he did not *surrender*. For the first time a real difference between Red Russia and Red China was ended neither by a victorious application of Russian pressure nor a victorious display of Chinese resistance, but by consultation between the leaders of both powers.

THIS new harmony, before it had time to become habitual, was threatened, however, on the occasion of the Geneva conference. Again, one of the factors involved was the internal division in the Russian party. Though all the Russian leaders seem to have been agreed on an armistice in Korea, there was still opposition among them to a new, more conciliatory policy in foreign affairs. How explain otherwise Khrushchev's speech in Prague, right in the middle of the Geneva proceedings, in which Churchill was personally insulted and the West as a whole was referred to as "our enemies"? (These phrases were dropped from Tass's and the Communist press reports of the speech.) Clearly Khrushchev had tried to sabotage the Geneva conference against the wishes of Malenkov. We know that Molotov's attitude oscillated sharply during the conference; we don't know exactly why—it is likely that he was echoing the conflicts back home in the Politburo.

Also, the Chinese, eager though they were to enter the arena of international diplomacy as representatives of a great power, sulked during the first half of the Geneva conference, in obvious opposition to Malenkov's

conciliatory line. The tension between Mao and the party of caution in Moscow, signaled during the negotiations for a Korean armistice, seemed to rise at Geneva. With the elimination of Kaokang and the consequent decrease in the danger of Russian interference in domestic Chinese affairs, Mao's fear of the left extremists in Moscow had disappeared for the while. His impatience with the obstacles Moscow was putting in the way of Chinese expansion grew in proportion, and this brought him closer to the leftists in the Russian Politburo.

At this very critical moment, it was the West that freed the Communist alliance from its impasse, and in an amazing way. The tension between Moscow and Peking sprang from the problems created by Western resistance to Chinese aggression. Was it best, from the standpoint of world Communism, to come to terms with Western resistance, especially in Indo-China, to the extent necessary to prevent a further consolidation of Western defense in Europe? Or would it be easier to disrupt that front by ruthless continuation of the war in Indo-China, regardless of the immediate effect this would have on Russia's "peace" campaign? It did not, presumably, occur to the Communist leaders that they would be able to gain territorially in Indo-China and weaken Western resistance and unity at the *same* time. But the West—quite to the surprise of both Communist powers, we can feel sure—capitulated at Geneva; it was the Western defense front, not the uneasy Russo-Chinese alliance, that cracked at and after Geneva.

In the face of the West's capitulation at Geneva, all antagonisms within the Communist bloc became meaningless. The left and right wings of the Chinese leadership had differed over the alternative of expansion abroad or social transformation at home; but if expansion could be got without a fight, why go on arguing? The left and right wings in Moscow had differed over whether the West might be more easily bullied by threats, or seduced by offers of "peace"; but with the West no longer resisting, the problem became meaningless. Moscow and Peking had differed over the right mixture of aggressiveness and conciliation to apply in dealing with the West; but when they both promptly got what they wanted their differences, too, became pointless.

The Communists could not believe their eyes at first; it took them several weeks to appreciate the extent of the West's surrender in Indo-China. When it had finally sunk in, Russo-Chinese cooperation became as close as it had ever been. Once again, the West had miscalculated. Concessions to Red China in 1954 had helped as little to divide her from Russia as rashness in 1950. In both cases China's hand was strengthened, and with it her alliance with Russia. During the last phase of the Geneva conference both powers acted for the first time with genuine and not simulated unity.

THE Western surrender in Indo-China also seems to have got Mao out of a difficulty it was altogether in the West's interests to maintain. The deep-seated antagonism between him and Ho Chi Minh has been touched on earlier. The Geneva conference, by getting France out of the battle in Indo-China, delivered Ho Chi Minh into Chinese hands. He will not be publicly humiliated, but Chinese influence in Vietnam, growing since 1950, will now become overwhelming, and thus the biggest obstacle Moscow had interposed to Chinese expansion in South Asia will disappear. Hence Mao, and not the Kremlin, was the one who profited most from the Western surrender at Geneva.

The Russo-Chinese treaty of 1950 is now bearing its first real fruits. In Geneva a new method of conducting Communist foreign policy reached maturity, and a joint Russo-Chinese conduct of world Communist policy was initiated. This means the culmination of one of Mao's dearest and oldest ambitions.

Starting as a faithful disciple of Moscow a quarter of a century ago, he was driven by Stalin's policies to seek independence for the Chinese Communist party. He won that independence, and maintained it in increasingly open opposition to Moscow; finally the time came when Moscow had to negotiate with a man it would have preferred to use as a mere instrument. At first Moscow was only half in earnest, but as the Russian leadership was shaken by one convulsion after another, while Mao continued to keep an unshaken grasp on his own party, Moscow

was compelled to take Chinese Communism more and more seriously. Ill-calculated Western aggressiveness (as in MacArthur's rash advance to the Yalu), and ill-calculated Western concessions (as at Geneva), both contributed in the meanwhile to the strengthening of Mao's hand. And so today, in his old age, he has become a full and equal member of the "collective leadership of world Communism," a man no longer to be suspected in the least of "separatist" or Titoist tendencies.

And this was not because he accepted the role of humble servant, but because he asserted his claim to the position of master and leader. Today Mao is the largest individual figure in world Communism, and overtops any single Russian leader. Without his participation no decision affecting the international Communist movement can be taken; without his consent no measure affecting that movement as a whole can be carried out.

BUT this does not mean at all that friction between Red Russia and Red China has come to an end. Nor is there any real sign that their rivalry has become "brotherly."

The Asiatic revolution that Russia did so much to promote and help may well be nearing the point where "white" Russia may be forced to play second fiddle to "colored" China in world Communism. Whether this turns out to be the case or not, the present struggle for the leadership of world Communism has changed its form. It is no longer a struggle between two state powers, but rather between factions inside a small group of international leaders, and the lines are no longer drawn according to national boundaries or national interests. It has turned into a struggle for power within a common international leadership, and while the relative strength of the respective states to which the contestants belong still plays a part, it is more and more a secondary part.

Mao no longer opposes China to Russia; now he is playing, in his own person, for the leadership of the whole Communist movement. His greatest handicap in this game would seem to be, not Russian opposition, but his own old age and poor health, and the lack, perhaps, of a suitable heir.